

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant hereby requests further examination and reconsideration of the application, in view of the foregoing amendments.

In the specification, the paragraphs have been amended to correctly conform the numbering of elements to the revised figures. In addition, figure numbers have been added for reference to items described in the specification and shown in the Figures.

The Examiner has raised objections with respect to matters of formality in Figures 1-8. Figures 1-8 have been redrawn to correct matters of formality. In amended Figure 3, the previously omitted element numeral 30 has been added. In Figure 4, the previous element numeral 62 has been removed. In Figure 6, the following numerals have been added: 92, 93, 95, 97, and 101. In Figure 7, the previously omitted element numeral 98 has been added.

The Examiner has acknowledged that claim 18 is directed to allowable subject matter. The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 3, 5, 7-10, 13, 28-32, 34, 35, 37 and 38 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomason (U.S. Patent 6,137,039 B1) in view of Jordan et al (U.S. Patent 6,249,241 B1). Applicant has canceled claims 28-32, 34, 35, 37 and 38 to place the Application in a condition ready for allowance.

In an Examiner's Interview conducted on March 23, 2004, Applicant and Examiner agreed claims 3-10, and 13 would be allowable if depending from an amended and allowed claim 2, since the limitations of claim 2 would be incorporated into the dependent claims. Applicant has amended claims 3-10, and 13. Claims 3-5, 7, 8, 10, and 13 to depend directly from claim 2, which has been amended to overcome the Examiner's objection (as explained below). Claims 6 and 9 now depend also depend from claim 2 through intervening claims. Claims 3-10, and 13 are now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has objected to claims 2, 11, 12, and 36 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has rewritten the limitations of claim 1 into claims 2, 11, and 12 and claims 2, 11 and 12 now stand in independent form. Applicant has rewritten the limitation of claim 35 into claim 36 and claim 36 now stands in independent form. Claims 2, 11, 12, and 36 have now overcome Examiner's objection and allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes that the amended claims 2-13, 18 and 36 now are in a condition for allowance and respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments